

AEROSPACE ENGINEERING AND MECHANICS

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Rosemount Aeronautical Research Laboratory



Supersonic test set up

On March 18, 1948, University of Minnesota President J. L. Morrill placed the University's seal to the deed of a piece of property near Rosemount, Minnesota which in subsequent years was to become known as one of the finest aeronautical research laboratories in the country. This official act concluded 2 years of active negotiations between the U.S. Government and University of Minnesota officials. John D. Ackerman played a major role in obtaining this piece of property previously known as the Gopher Ordnance Works. At the time of the transfer, the property totalled 8,000 acres and the materials had a scrap value of nearly \$10 million. There were 55 miles of roads, 26 miles of railroad tracks, close to 200 buildings, a fully equipped hospital, 25 staff homes, shops of all kinds, a steam plant, sewage plant, etc.

It was on this property that several wind tunnels were built along with other related aeronautical research facilities. These tunnels had the capability to operate from the transsonic range into the hypersonic.

Over the years, this facility has held major research contracts with most of the aerospace companies and the military services. The RAL operation was staffed primarily by Faculty members from the Aeronautical Engineering Department and their students. Some of the activities are shown in the [adjacent pictures](#). This staff and the facilities were very active in the late 1940s and through the 1950s, often doing nearly a million dollars in research during a given year. Today Rosemount is essentially closed, though some local companies use parts of the property and from time to time the University of Minnesota has some special need for its facilities.

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